

HOUSE BILL REPORT

HB 2090

As Reported by House Committee On:
Early Learning & Children's Services

Title: An act relating to the Washington family policy council.

Brief Description: Adding the director of the department of early learning to the family policy council.

Sponsors: Representatives Dickerson, Dunn and Kenney.

Brief History:

Committee Activity:

Early Learning & Children's Services: 2/23/07 [DP].

Brief Summary of Bill

- Adding the Director of the Department of Early Learning to the Family Policy Council.

HOUSE COMMITTEE ON EARLY LEARNING & CHILDREN'S SERVICES

Majority Report: Do pass. Signed by 7 members: Representatives Kagi, Chair; Haler, Ranking Minority Member; Walsh, Assistant Ranking Minority Member; Appleton, Hinkle, Pettigrew and Roberts.

Staff: Chris Alejano (786-7115).

Background:

The Legislature enacted the Family Policy Initiative in 1992 which created the Family Policy Council (Council) to design and carry out principle-centered, systemic reforms to improve outcomes for children, youth and families. The Council is comprised of 14 members consisting of the Superintendent of Public Instruction; the Secretary of the Department of Social and Health Services; the Secretary of the Department of Health; the Commissioner of the Employment Security Department; the Director of the Department of Community, Trade and Economic Development (or their designees); one Legislator from each caucus of the Senate and House of Representatives; and one representative of the Governor.

This analysis was prepared by non-partisan legislative staff for the use of legislative members in their deliberations. This analysis is not a part of the legislation nor does it constitute a statement of legislative intent.

One of the Council's main activities is working with the state's Community Public Health and Safety Networks to prevent important social problems such as child abuse and youth substance abuse. These networks are community-based, volunteer boards, developed to give local communities more autonomy, resources to help improve the lives of children and families in their communities, and provide recommendations for policy changes to improve state and local child and family service systems.

The Department of Early Learning (DEL) was established in 2006 as an executive branch agency whose primary duties are to implement early learning policy and to coordinate, consolidate, and integrate child care and early learning programs to promote an efficient use of funds.

Summary of Bill:

The Director of the DEL, or the Director's designee, is added to the Family Policy Council.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Not requested.

Effective Date: The bill takes effect 90 days after adjournment of session in which bill is passed.

Staff Summary of Public Testimony:

(In support) Given the focus of the Family Policy Council, it's appropriate to have the Director of the DEL (Director), or their designee, serving on the Council. The Thurston Community Network focuses on young children from birth to six to prevent child abuse and neglect and had a previous working relationship with the Department of Social and Health Services (DSHS) prior to some of its services merging into the Department of Early Learning. Adding the Director to the Council is just a continuum of that relationship. The Family Policy Council officially supports the addition of the Director to the Family Policy Council. Since the programs that have gone over to the Department of Early Learning came from the member agency of DSHS, this relationship would continue past policy. The Greater Pierce County Community Network also supports the addition of the Director to the Family Policy Council.

(Opposed) None.

Persons Testifying: (In support) Representative Dickerson, prime sponsor; Helen Myreck, Greater Pierce County Community Network; and Margie Reeves and Laura Porter, Family Policy Council.

Persons Signed In To Testify But Not Testifying: None.